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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Revolving Museum is Taking Massachusetts City on a Transformational 'ARTventure' with Global Implications

City-wide art project in Lowell will transform three historically significant yet neglected sites into a stunning example of community involvement and urban revitalization for all the world to emulate.

LOWELL, Mass.; Feb. 21, 2007 – Promising a “Creative Revolution in the Making,” The Revolving Museum today made public for the first time details on its upcoming *ARTventure Series*, the museum’s most ambitious project in its 22-year history. Running from May through September 2007, “*ARTventures*” (www.LowellARTventures.org) is a collaborative public art series, urban revitalization project and city-wide celebration of Lowell’s continuing evolution from its pioneering role in America’s Industrial Revolution to its emergence as a worldwide model for a new Creative Revolution.

An interdisciplinary *ARTventures* team of more than 1,000 artists, scientists, civic leaders, youth and community members will produce innovative, creative works of public art that will transform three of Lowell’s most historically significant yet underutilized urban sites into vibrant, thriving examples of urban revitalization, community involvement and economic empowerment.

ARTventures joins Lowell’s series of signature summertime events that annually draw an estimated one million people to the city. In 2007, these include the Jack Kerouac “On The Road” Scroll Festival, Lowell Folk Festival, African Festival and the Southeast Asian Water Festival. In the future, *ARTventures* will grow in scope with the goal of having some aspects of the program become permanent fixtures. In this way, the program will serve as a blueprint for cities anywhere in the world to emulate.

Aside from its artistic objectives and goal of community-wide participation and support, the project is intended to attract a growing population of residents and businesses to the area by calling attention to Lowell’s acclaimed urban renaissance and steadily improving quality of life.

“Once the center of the Industrial Revolution, Lowell is on the rise as a visionary city leading a new artistic revolution that involves young and old, artists and scientists, civic and community leaders,” said Jerry Beck, founder and artistic director of The Revolving Museum. “*ARTventures* will integrate some of the world’s most innovative art, science and education programs to create a truly extraordinary and inspiring artistic and theatrical adventure. From wide-scale video projection, art installations, theatrical elements, feats of science and stunning artistic urban landscaping, this dynamic project will celebrate Lowell’s wonderfully diverse past, present and future to create a bold vision of civic pride and unity.”

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Funding and in-kind support thus far for *ARTventures* has come from: City of Lowell, City of Lowell Cultural Fund, Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL), Lowell National Historical Park, UMASS-Lowell, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Enterprise Bank, Greater Merrimack Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Community Teamwork, Inc. (CTI); New England Quilt Museum, LTC Media Center and Trinity Ambulance. Additional sponsorships are needed, and interested individuals and organizations may contact The Revolving Museum for details.

Selected Sites

The principal sites for the *ARTventure Series* will be Lucy Larcom Park, home of Lowell High School, the second largest public school by enrollment in Massachusetts; The Smokestack next to the Lowell National Historical Park, and The Riverwalk, adjacent to the Merrimack River. Projects proposed include:

Lucy Larcom Park is an under appreciated treasure in downtown Lowell that honors the city's illustrious history. Named after a mill girl who worked an average of 70 hours per week in harsh conditions, the park pays tribute to one of the first important feminists in the country. With her irrepressible spirit, Lucy Larcom rose above the drudgery and injustice of her working environment and became a poet of social and political importance.

Lucy Larcom Park features a promenade of walkways, trees, important architectural landmarks and a central canal. But the area suffers from serious neglect. Beginning on June 9, *ARTventures* will transform the park into an experimental and interactive playground filled with art installations, theatrical elements, feats of science and fertile gardens. Proposed projects will highlight the canal, the skywalk, and the landscape. Some of the proposed projects include:

- "On the Road on the Road" -- Faculty and students of the University of Massachusetts Lowell English Department will create a work featuring passages from Lowell native Jack Kerouac's celebrated novel stenciled literally "on the road" between Lucy Larcom Park and the Boott Mills Museum. Short prose works that engage in thematic dialogue with passages from *On the Road* will be interspersed or across the dividing line and juxtaposed with stenciled student poems. This exhibit will lead visitors from the park to the location where the original manuscript scroll of *On the Road* will be on full display. Connecting visitors through space and across time with Kerouac's book, the work will fade on its own as the months pass, symbolizing both the communal nature of artistic creation and the intrinsic transitory nature of life "on the road."
- "Green Dream" -- Dr. John Warner, world-renowned pioneer of the Green Chemistry program at UMass Lowell, and his students will collaborate with local artists to create an interactive ring toss installation that explores how "green chemistry" reduces the amount of hazardous byproducts resulting from the production chemical materials. This large-scale molecular environment will highlight, in an original and innovative way, how new environment-friendly chemistry processes can prevent pollution.
- "Quilt Projection" -- The Revolving Museum, in collaboration with The New England Quilt Museum and a large number of community quilters, will create a 20'x 40' quilt and movie screen that will project a series of video commentaries, short films and animations developed by local and regional filmmakers.
- "The Moving Gardens of Earthly Delights" -- The poorly kept plot that runs alongside Lowell High School will be the site for a magical garden on wheels, using an antique textile pushcart. These mobile gardens of flowers, herbs and artworks will enlist local farmers and gardeners to offer the public a unique team building, ecologically-focused learning experience.

The public will experience the immediate, positive changes that can be made to their overlooked environment as the pushcarts move around the city to portray the evolving role of gardens and landscape in urban areas.

- “Side Show” -- Revolving Museum Founder/Artistic Director Jerry Beck will invite dozens of local and regional artists to produce a series of 8’x8’ carnival-like side show banners that explore a range of personal, social and environmental themes and issues. These commissioned works will be attached to an architectural environment using scaffolding to create an intimate space for performances, community workshops and other activities.

The Smokestack near Lowell’s National Historical Park will become the focal point emphasizing the impact of industrialization on a burgeoning urban culture and how the arts are playing a defining role in the city’s revitalization.

A video projection project will illuminate the stack at night with a series of experimental films and video that showcase community engagement in civic life; the role of young people in society; themes that focus on personal, social and environmental issues; and other innovative explorations. The project will highlight the current and pervasive Creative Revolution to allow the public to “ride the wave” of history, using the vehicles of public art and urban revitalization.

To celebrate this aspect of the project -- opening on May 12 to inaugurate the *ARTventures Series* -- a block party is planned that will include public art, puppetry, music, dance and community workshops.

- Video installation – Well known local and regional video artists and film makers will collaborate with local high school students to create a large-scale video projection on the unused smokestack at Lowell’s National Historical Park. Some of the proposed videos will explore the intimate relationships of private and public rituals using the body to define various activities, feelings and emotions. The narrow smokestack will become an icon/object to define the physical exertion and psychological tension of the moment as a visceral experience. By confining moving images on the smokestack’s facade, Marika’s work will address the intimacy and violence in our personal and social lives solutions and the like

The Riverwalk is a beautifully designed pedestrian walkway that stretches along the banks of the Merrimack River. Developed by the City of Lowell and the National Park Service, it extends roughly one mile from Boott Mill Courtyard to the University of Massachusetts-Lowell campus and LeLacheur Park, home of the Lowell Spinners, a minor league baseball club affiliated with the Boston Red Sox.

The Riverwalk provides access to many of Lowell’s historic mill buildings as well as the newly developed Tsongas Arena. Despite lovely views of the river, two bridges and the massive mill buildings, the Riverwalk is often deserted. *ARTventures* will incorporate the Riverwalk into a theatrical adventure, examining female archetypes and male dominance evident in nature and industry. The inspiration for several projects will be gender roles, the natural environment and the influence of industry specific to prominent cultural groups in Lowell. Some of the proposed projects include:

- Boott Mill Complex -- the gateway to the Riverwalk, Boott Mill is one of the largest clusters of mill buildings in Lowell. Suspended along The Riverwalk will be an 18’ x 40’ white dress. This ghost-like garment, a symbol of both the strength and the plight of the “mill girl,” will serve as a cinema screen during evening hours. Historic photographs and film, provided by the Lowell National Park’s extensive library collection, will be contrasted with contemporary images of working women, female civic leaders and progressive industry.
- Cambodian master artists Domnang Pin and Yari Livan will collaborate with teams of youth and Lowell’s Southeast Asian Water Festival Committee to design “Spirit House-Dragon Boat.” Incorporating traditional Khmer designs with contemporary imagery, a 20-foot long multi-media vessel will be produced that will focus on issues affecting the Cambodian community, such as war, violence, racism and cultural assimilation.

Anchored in the Merrimack River, the boat will be illuminated at night using solar energy panels, with innovative lighting features and special effects.

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- “Storyteller” -- along the Riverwalk are several beautiful yet polluted sand bars that will serve as the foundation for numerous architectural installations composed of the driftwood and refuse that clutter the area. The Revolving Museum’s Teen Arts Group (TAG) will collaborate with a team of women storytellers from Lowell’s most recent immigrant population – primarily Brazilians, Africans, Indians and Latin Americans -- to produce a series of monologues addressing displacement, assimilation and industry’s impact on the individual.

With the river serving as a gentle reminder of life before industry, the Riverwalk becomes a journey of reconnection and restoration from a life altered by industry.

About The Revolving Museum

Revolving Museum is an evolving laboratory of creative expression for people of all backgrounds, ages, and abilities who seek to experience the transformative power of art. Through public art, exhibitions, and educational programs, The Museum promotes artistic exploration and appreciation; encourages community participation and growth; and provides opportunities for empowerment and social change.

The Museum is located at 22 Shattuck St., Lowell, MA 01852. It is open, free of charge, Tuesday through Sunday from 11 am to 4 pm. The Revolving Museum is a 501(c)(3), charitable organization. For more information, call 978-YES-ARTS (978/937-2787) or visit www.revolvingmuseum.org.

Individuals and organizations interested in supporting *ARTventures* may contact Jerry Beck or Diane Testa at The Revolving Museum.

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